

Claims

1. A telecommunications system comprising:
 - a messaging-enabled communications device configured for a roaming-free connection to a mobile telephone services provider;
 - 5 a distributor, the distributor providing the communications device to a user; and
 - a gateway, the gateway being for placing a telephone call to a destination telephone having a telephone number indicated by a message received from the mobile communications device and also for placing a 10 telephone call to the user through the service provider to patch the user to the destination telephone without incurring roaming charges; wherein the communication device is registered with the gateway before it is provided to the user.
- 15 2. The system of Claim 1, wherein the message is an SMS.
3. The system of Claim 1, wherein the message is an MMS.
4. The system of Claim 1, wherein the mobile communications device is a 20 mobile telephone.
5. The system of Claim 1, wherein mobile communications device is a SIM card.

6. The system of Claim 1, wherein the user receives the telephone call at the mobile communications device.

7. The system of Claim 1, wherein the user receives the telephone call at a
5 telephone having a telephone number indicated by the message.

8. The system of Claim 1, wherein the mobile communications device is provided to the user by renting it to the user.

10 9. The system of Claim 1, wherein the mobile communications device is provided to the user by selling it to the user.

10. The system of Claim 1, wherein the distributor is a retail outlet.

15 11. The system of Claim 1, wherein the distributor provides a selection of mobile communications devices configured for roaming-free connections to different mobile telephone services providers.

12. The system of Claim 1, further comprising:

20 a database containing user identification information and billing information of the user;

an identification system for obtaining the user identification information from the message;

a data processing system for matching the user identification information obtained from the message with the user identification information in the database to identify the user.

5 13. The system of Claim 12, wherein the user identification information and billing information of the user is entered into the database based on information obtained upon the user registering with the distributor.

10 14. The system of Claim 1, wherein the user may enable a diversion of calls from another communication device to the gateway, whereby the calls may be connected to the messaging-enabled communications device.

15 15. The system of Claim 1, wherein the distributor is located outside the service area of the mobile telephone services provider.

16. The system of Claim 1, wherein the gateway is located outside the service area of the mobile telephone services provider.

20 17. The system of Claim 1, wherein the gateway is arranged, upon receiving a first phone call from the communication device, to place a second phone call to the device and thereby initiate the sending of the message as part of the second phone call.

18. The system of Claim 1, wherein the communication device activates a ring-tone when the message is being received by the gateway.

19. A telecommunications method comprising the steps of:
5 providing a messaging-enabled communications device configured for a roaming-free connection to a telephone services provider;
providing a distributor, the distributor providing the mobile communications device to a user; and
providing a gateway, the gateway placing a telephone call through the
10 gateway to a destination telephone having a telephone number indicated by a message received from the mobile communications device and also placing a telephone call through the telephone services provider to the user to patch the customer to the destination telephone without incurring roaming charges;
wherein
15 the communication device is registered with the gateway before it is provided to the user.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the message is an SMS.

20. 21. The method of claim 19, wherein the message is an MMS.

22. The method of claim 19, wherein the mobile communications device is a mobile telephone.

23. The method of claim 19, wherein mobile communications device is a SIM card.

24. The method of claim 19, wherein the user receives the telephone call at
5 the mobile communications device.

25. The method of claim 19, wherein the user receives the telephone call at
a telephone having a telephone number indicated by the message.

10 26. The method of claim 19, wherein the mobile communications device is
provided to the user by renting it to the user.

27. The method of claim 19, wherein the mobile communications device is
provided to the user by selling it to the user.

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28. The method of claim 19, wherein the distributor is a retail outlet.

20 29. The method of claim 19, wherein the distributor provides a selection of
mobile communications devices configured for roaming-free connections to
different mobile telephone services providers.

30. The method of claim 19, further comprising:
a database containing user identification information and billing
information of the user;

an identification system for obtaining the user identification information from the message;

a data processing system for matching the user identification information obtained from the message with the user identification information in the database to identify the user.

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31. The method of claim 30, wherein the user identification information and billing information of the user is entered into the database based on information obtained upon the user registering with the distributor.

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32. The method of claim 19, wherein the distributor is located outside the service area of the mobile telephone services provider.

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33. The method of claim 19, wherein the gateway is located outside the service area of the mobile telephone services provider.

34. The method of claim 19, wherein the user may enable a diversion of calls from another communication device to the gateway, whereby the calls may be connected to the messaging-enabled communications device.

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35. The method of claim 19, further comprising the steps of
the gateway receiving a first phone call from the communication device;
the gateway hanging up the phone call; and

the gateway placing a second phone call to the device, thereby initiating the sending of the message as part of the second phone call.

36. The method of claim 19, further comprising the step of activating a ring-tone in the communication device when the gateway is receiving the message.

37. A messaging-enabled enabled phone arranged to generate a menu of options, the menu comprising destination telephone numbers; wherein selection of one or more of the destination numbers causing the phone to generate a message to a service provider of SMS Callback;

the message containing indications of the at least one of the destination numbers;

the message causing the service provider to place call(s) to the at least one destination number and also to place a call to the sender of the message, and patching the calls when they are connected.

38. A messaging-enabled enabled phone as claimed in claim 37, which is called up by a button in the messaging-enabled phone.

20 39. A messaging-enabled enabled phone as claimed in claim 37 or 38, wherein the message is SMS.

40. A messaging-enabled enabled phone as claimed in claim 37, 38 or 39, wherein the message is MMS.

41. A messaging-enabled enabled phone as claimed in any one of claims 37
to 40, wherein the message masks the gateway of the service provider.

5 42. A messaging-enabled enabled phone having a button wherein a
message is sent to a service provider providing SMS Callback when pressed.